

May 2010

Mercure launches a new hotel in Southampton

- Mercure Southampton Centre Hotel opens after comprehensive refurbishment -

A historic Southampton landmark has been transformed after a massive refurbishment programme, creating a spectacular 90-bedroom hotel; a significant addition to the Mercure portfolio. The newly restored Mercure Southampton Centre opens its doors in May, offering guests affordable luxury, whether it's for business or pleasure.

Mercure, part of the Accor group, is known for its individually styled hotels, each with their own distinctive character. These range from city centre hotels to country manors in key provincial locations. Mercure Southampton Centre is the 33rd hotel to join the Mercure UK network, following a franchise agreement with Longrose.

Formerly the Dolphin Hotel, the stunning Grade II listed building has stood in the heart of Southampton for over 500 years. The extensive refurbishment undertaken by Mercure has been sensitive to the historical qualities of the building, ensuring the hotel offers a modern and contemporary feel, whilst retaining its historic charm.

Jonathan Sheard, Director of Operations, Mercure UK and Ireland comments: "We are delighted to have been able to restore this well-known local hotel to its former glory. Its central location, close to Southampton's main shopping areas and the historic harbour, will make Mercure Southampton Centre the natural choice for visitors to the city."

Neil Brailsford, General Manager, added: "It's great to see this local hotel come alive again after all the hard work. The age and history of the hotel makes it truly unique and we didn't want to lose this during the refurbishment. The building is steeped in tradition and it was often visited by

the timeless author, Jane Austen, who even chose to hold her 18th birthday party at the hotel, hence our new Jane Austen suite.”

The hotel's newly transformed interior and exterior provide the ideal setting for weddings, with a number of beautiful backdrops, including the Jane Austen suite, for those all-important photographs. This function suite features two striking bay windows, reported to be the largest in Britain, and can host up to 100 guests for a sit down meal. And to help happy couples organise their perfect day, the hotel offers its own in-house wedding planner.

Mercure Southampton Centre Hotel also features the contemporary and stylish Signature restaurant. Using locally sourced produce for its extensive menu, the restaurant caters for all tastes, making it perfect for business or pleasure. The menu is perfectly complemented by a selection of wines specially selected for Mercure hotels.

- Ends -

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Notes to editors

To contact the wedding, events and conference teams, please call 02380 386460

*For more than 35 years, within the Accor Group, **Mercure** has exemplified **expert hospitality and personalised service**. Operating in more than 50 countries around the world, Mercure boasts hotels with **distinctive personalities** carefully preserved through the type of services offered and the decor, both of which vary from one hotel to the next.*

*The hotel managers and staffs of the 690 Mercure hotels are **hospitality professionals**. Attentive and available, they are ready to listen and make sure their guests enjoy a stay full of genuine moments of pleasure and relaxation in a truly warm and comfortable setting.*

More information on Mercure hotels is available on mercure.com.